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Justifying Mass Murder

Gregory Pavlik

Conservative opinion is monolithic: Truman was right to drop the atomic bomb on Japan, the critics are anti-American leftists, and no good person thinks otherwise.

There is a odd stridency behind the polemics. Much of this can be explained by the status to which World War II has been elevated. The war has taken on the aura of a founding era. In all its major aspects, the modern American welfare-warfare state owes more to the interventionist policies of Roosevelt and Truman than it does to the constitutional republic of 1787.

Criticism of the bombing is a de facto criticism of the order constructed in the wake of the war. This has not been lost on the "conservative" wing of apologists for the present order. Whatever residual opposition to the encroachment of war-mongering, militarism, and the mass annihilation of civilians may have existed on the right after World War II was long ago drowned out in the hosanna of praises for U.S. cold war policies that trace their lineage directly to the Roosevelt-Truman era.

World War II remains foundational to the entire interventionist mindset, the reincarnation of Hitler lurking behind every enemy that the State Department has concocted to justify its power, influence, and control.

It's no accident that the establishment chorus urging us on toward intervention in the Balkans invokes the Holocaust as a precursor to "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia—although the kept press only mentions the atrocities of one side (the Christian Serbs) against whom it has an implacable bias.

The archetype for demonization along these lines remains Sadaam Hussein, who still merits punishment for following the model of conduct laid out by George Bush in Panama—i.e., the military takeover of a sovereign state in order to establish a puppet regime.

Amazingly, liberals—who got us into World War II, directed it, and discarded any semblance of civilized conduct during it—can count on conservatives to make up apologies for their mess 50 years down the line. It's a strange doctrine indeed that damns government as fundamentally evil and at the same time excoriates critics of the use of government power for mass destruction.

There are other problems with the conservative line on the atomic bomb: it fails entirely to address the facts that are by now easily accessible and widely known. The litany is the same: "Hiroshima has become one of the many symbols of a countercultural hostility to America among the intelligentsia in general and the 'revisionist'

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P.C. Watch

170 Million White Victims?

"Black racism" is the "giant black hole in the center of America's national debate," wrote Paul Sheehan to *The Atlantic* (10/95).

"My own reporting," said the chief U.S. correspondent for Australia's Consolidated Press, "based on Justice Department crime reports and victim surveys, found that each year, more than a million white Americans are victims of violent black crime, while about 130,000 blacks are victims of white violence.

"When these figures are adjusted on a per capita basis (the black population is only one seventh the white population), they reveal that blacks are committing *more than fifty*

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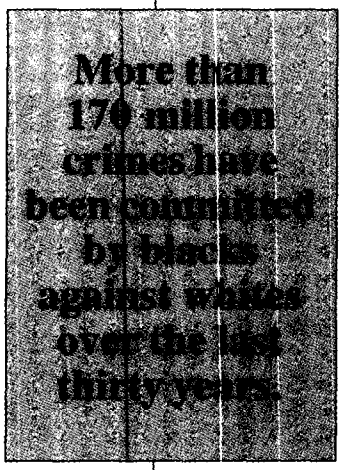
times as many violent interracial crimes as whites.

"The cumulative effect of this huge disparity is staggering, especially when the far more numerous nonviolent crimes of theft are included: I found that more than 170 million crimes have been committed by blacks against whites over the last thirty years.

"This problem has always been explained as a by-product of poverty and exclusion. But the racial character of much black crime is obvious every day in a cascade of large and small animosities.



"This is the great disaster of American ideals today, as Jefferson predicted it would be—yet the government and the national news media...do not want to touch it."

No Justice, No Peace

Casey Cedotal, a "reed-thin" 16-year-old white boy was sitting alone in the back of the bus in Houma, Louisiana, headed for school, when the "beefy" 17-year-old black Donald Mart approached him and demanded $2. Casey said he didn't have any money, so Donald immediately started hitting him. Three other black youths joined in, and then Donald "produced a broomstick" and struck Casey again and again, notes the *Wall Street Journal* (10/11/95). The beating went on until the black youths tired of it.

Although Donald was both spiritually and physically scarred —his left jaw, for example, now "juts out"—and he had to drop out of school, the district attorney, Douglas Greenburg, offered a plea bargain that let Donald off with a $50 fine, and didn't charge the three other attackers at all.

Donald's grandfather then asked the judge how he could have agreed to such a lenient sentence, give the virulence, length, and unprovoked nature of the beating as shown on the tape from the bus's video security camera. "What video?" asked the judge, who later saw it and was "outraged." Greenburg had withheld the video.

When a local tv station owner requested a copy of the tape from the sheriff and planned to show it on a news show, Greenburg seized it, later claiming that broadcasting "this type of senseless violence, unfortunately racial in nature... constituted a reckless, insensitive, and highly dangerous undertaking."

Weasel Words

The passive voice is useful in diffusing responsibility. One of the funniest examples ran in a *New York Times* (8/26/95) article on why all right-thinking Frenchmen are boycotting the three cities with National Front mayors. (Although no one boycotts the cities with Communist mayors.)

Why did le Pen's party do so well in the city of Toulon, for example? Because, according to the *Times*, North African immigrants have been "left to founder in the urban problems of unemployment, vandalism, and drug abuse, creating the sense of menace the National Front says it can root out."

That is, urban problems exist independently of the people left to founder in them. The actual bums, vandals, and street thugs aren't responsible.

Sea, Sand, Sun, and Stalin

Stalin's dacha near the "long pebbled beaches of Sochi, Russia's beloved Black Sea resort," is now a hotel. The "cool, beautiful rooms, paneled in oak, chestnut, and beech" come complete with a dummy of the dictator and a private pool, beach, and forest. A large, one-bedroom suite rents for $140 a night.

You can "see his office, where he liked to drive a nail into the paneling on which to hang his hat," says the *New York Times* (10/3/95) and "sit on a couch next to the waxwork Stalin and wonder how it all went so wrong." How it all went so wrong from the perspective of the *Times*, that is. Trotsky and Lenin were so promising.

Good Luck

A high school basketball coach who "looked the other way when players used a racist symbol as a good luck charm," has been suspended without pay for a year by the Manassas, Virginia, schools. Before games, the team drew in the dirt a symbol that supposedly represents the view of a black man who had been thrown down a well by four Klansmen (AP, 10/4/95).

Little Black Women

When a black student, Jillian Woodruff, tried out for the part of Meg in "Little Women" at North Allegheny Senior High School in Pittsburgh, she was turned down by the director on the grounds that Meg was white. Racism!

The entire cast was immediately canned, and the school begged Woodruff to try out again, promising she would get the part. Principal Lawrence Butterini assured Woodruff's parents that

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"race would not be a factor in any future school plays."

What, one wonders, would be the reaction to the casting of an Arab as Othello, even though as a Moor, that's what he was, or of a white boy as the young Martin Luther King, Jr.? (AP, 9/21/95)

O.J.

There's not much to say about the O.J. verdict, which was predicted in this space long before the trial, except that all the spins are wrong. It's nonsense to say, for example, that fame or riches meant he would get off. They didn't do Michael Milken or Leona Helmsley any good.

Nor did the jury arrive at its verdict after carefully examining the evidence, as Colin Powell claims. *No one* believes that O.J didn't kill his ex-wife and Ronald Goldman—not the jury, not his lawyers, not his cheering supporters—only that he was innocent because what he did should be excused.

Even nuttier are the broader notions about race that liberals have promoted. First, we were told we are all the same. Outlaw prejudice and reeducate the majority, and we would all be one big happy family. Now we're told that there are two separate realities, black and white, and never the twain shall meet.

This is a transparently false attempts to excuse the jury. Here's the one reality: O.J. was let off, perhaps to murder again, because of pervasive black hatred of whitey. Fewer and fewer black juries will convict blacks of any crime, let alone crimes against whites. There was also the additional point for this trial that—as all polls show—black women detest white women who sleep with black men.

Burt Blumert points out that the prosecution also conspired to fix the O.J. trial. When the L.A. district attorney urged a change of venue from Santa Monica court district where the crime was committed to central Los Angeles, and left 15 peremptory challenges unused, it joined in the conspiracy to get a jury that would not convict. Why? Because L.A. elites were terrified of another race riot, and would do anything to prevent it.

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There's only one question left: will Mark Fuhrman, who apparently kept his screenwriter girlfriend happy by telling her what she wanted to hear, get life without parole or the death penalty? After all, the real crime in America today is using the n-word, not committing the m-word. ■

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historians in particular." (Thomas Sowell); 60s radicals are "reaching back a generation and demeaning their parents' sacrifice, patriotism and decisiveness, saying there was no need and no excuse for dropping the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki" (Cal Thomas); subsequent columns appeared by Bill Buckley, Don Feder, and others in the same vein.

Reading through the commentaries is an exercise in frustration. There is no concise refutation of the revisionist arguments, just guilt by ideological inclination. None of the conservative polemicists even bother to address the arguments of historians that counter their beliefs. Indeed, the only real analysis that appeared along those lines was in the September issue of the malignant *Commentary*, which also treated the revisionist indictment of the bombing as motivated by left-wing bias.

It is true that the Left has reported on a part of this story. For example, the Summer 1995 issue of *Covert Action Quarterly* recounts that U.S. intelligence had intercepted a German communication stating bluntly that the Japanese were willing to surrender to the U.S. and of U.S. knowledge—prior to Potsdam—of Japanese transmissions to their ambassador in Moscow with instructions to ask the Russians to help in mediating a settlement. Other left-wing reports in *Z*, *The Progressive*, and *The Nation* have maintained similar positions.

However, this only begins to approach the facts that have been uncovered and available for years regarding the Japanese desire to surrender. These incredible facts are all the more astounding because they come from conservative sources such as the Old Right *Chicago Tribune* and even the young *National Review*.

The most amazing revelation appeared on the front page of the *Tribune* by the ardent conservative Walter Trohan. The article appeared after wartime censorship restrictions—another wonderful gift of the Rooseveltian garrison state—were lifted just days after V-J day on August 19, 1945. It's now forgotten that Roosevelt attempted to shut down the *Tribune* because his dictator complex allowed him to accept no criticism.

The gist of the report is simple and stunning: "Two days before the late President Roosevelt left the last week in January for the Yalta conference with Prime Minister Churchill and Marshal Stalin, he received a Japanese offer to sur-

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render identical with the terms subsequently concluded by his successor, Harry S. Truman." The Japanese offer was based on "five separate overtures." Gen. MacArthur endorsed it fully, and recommended immediate action be taken to end the war in the Pacific. After the war, Herbert Hoover, reluctant to accept the veracity of the report, contacted MacArthur, who confirmed the accuracy of the Trohan account.

The report is worth reading in its entirety, as Trohan lays out the details of the Japanese surrender offer: full surrender of the military, U.S. occupation of Japan, Japanese withdrawal from all areas occupied during its imperial expansion and the war, regulation of Japanese industry, turning over "war criminals," and release of all Japanese prisoners of war. The emperor was to be a U.S. puppet, a role that would be increasingly familiar to national leaders around the globe in the coming years.

According to Trohan, Roos-evelt skimmed MacArthur's 40-page communication and dismissed it: "MacArthur is our greatest general and our poorest politician." However, the report was kept on file with the high command and became the basis of the Truman-Attlee Potsdam declaration calling for the surrender of Japan.

Truman was aware of the Japanese peace efforts as well. In July he took up the issue with Stalin at Bebelsburg, who counseled against accepting the Japanese peace overtures.

The great Old Right historian Harry Elmer Barnes picked up the cudgel against the Truman administration on the issue of the atomic bomb in the *National Review*, May 10, 1958. As incredible as it may seem, the editors then allowed, and even at times encouraged, criticism of World War II.

Barnes pointed out that the Trohan piece was never challenged by the White House or the State Department. In point of fact, it was given the silent treatment throughout the entire U.S. press, a process that Barnes elsewhere referred to as the "Historical Blackout."

The Barnes report also recounts the information revealed by Admiral Ellis M. Zacharias of the Intelligence Service of the U.S. Navy, both in his book *Secret Missions* and in a controversial series of articles. Zacharias pointed that Naval Intelligence had long been aware of the desperate straits of the Japanese. More to the point, Barnes had access to a personal witness of Truman's private declaration in May 1945 that given the conditions and desires of the Japanese, there was no longer any need to continue fighting to end the war.

The deaths of Americans at Iwo Jima and Okinawa were unnecessary sacrifices by patriotic young American men betrayed by their rulers.

There is also the revelation of the 1946 United States Strategic Bombing Survey that stated "Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bomb had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated."

The facts that continue to emerge to this day present a bleaker picture still for Truman apologists. The Associated Press reported in April of this year that "Newly declassified documents suggest that both Germany and Japan, using the Vatican, tried to end World War II before they were forced to surrender unconditionally." One of the documents from the archives of the OSS (which later became the CIA) reports on a meeting between Myron Taylor, Roosevelt's representative at the Vatican, and the Japanese Ambassador, Harada Ken.

With a little digging, a clear pattern begins to emerge. The Japanese initiatives to end the war were not haphazard, insincere, or unofficial. They were consistent, persistent, and desperate. Initially, the Japanese had wished to avoid involving the Russians in any capacity. By the time July rolled around, Japanese Emperor Hirohito was writing personal letters to Stalin begging his aid in ending the United States onslaught.

The facts also show that neither Roosevelt nor Truman gave a damn about the loss of lives. American and Japanese bloodshed could have been ended at any time the American president showed a willingness to do so. To bring the matter home: the deaths of Americans at Iwo Jima and Okinawa were unnecessary sacrifices by patriotic young American men betrayed by their rulers.

Why should any conservative with a lick of principle exalt the memory of the two men who did so much to destroy our constitution, our freedoms, and the lives of countless Americans?

Considering the indictment conservatives have built up over the years against Roosevelt and Truman, why should the benefit of the doubt be given on the issue of the bomb? The Old Right position on Truman didn't soften after the war. In the old *Freeman* edited by Harry Hazlitt, Suzanne LaFollette, and John Chamberlain, the standard was clear: Impeach Truman!

We had enough war without the Korean war, and America was

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ready for peace. Conservatives were the peace party, and as Murray N. Rothbard used to point out, with the exception of a few leftists like I.F. Stone, major opposition to the Korean War came from the so-called "extreme right," particularly in the Congress. (Incidentally, *The Freeman* was sabotaged in the fifties by William Buckley, ripe from active duty with the CIA and determined to turn the conservative movement into the war party.)

The Trohan and Barnes reports reveal another important point. Namely, that conservatives were once consistent critics of government power, raw force, and militarism; that they opposed not only U.S. entry into World War II, but also the conduct of the war; and that conservatives once felt that mass murder was a practice to be condemned and not excused.

If we are serious about the restoring the values of the Old Republic, we must consider the wise positions espoused by its last organized defenders. The detonation of the atomic bomb was a monstrous act in the service of a regime that now controls our destiny and throttles whatever virtues are left in the country. There doesn't seem to be any sense in apologizing for it. ■

Mr. Pavlik is editor of Forgotten Lessons: Selected Essays of John T. Flynn *(Foundation for Economic Education, 1995).*

Conservative Wars

Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

Bill Kristol's reputation is shot, the *Weekly Standard* has flopped, D.C. conservatives are bitterly divided, Congressional freshmen have bolted, and the populist right is preparing to abandon the Republican Party. Can we make sense of all this frenzied, crazy, wonderful news?

These Conservative Wars are a consequence of a peculiar moment in history. A major presidential election is around the corner and the Republicans have no candidate they can uniformly call their own.

National Review stood athwart history and yelled, "Come on."

Let's grant that elections are the bane of American political life, a waste of time and money for what usually amounts to changing the guard's uniform. For those who invest their energies in the attainment and exercise of power, however, this is a scary moment, and we need to understand how it came about, what the Republican elites plan to do about it, and how it affects the future of the paleo movement.

The elites tell us that elections swing the pendulum from right to left, and then back again. But the reality of spending, taxes, regulations, egalitarianism, and centralization show that the pendulum has long been stuck on the left. The 1990s is the Decade of Government Oppression, which followed the Decade of Government Greed, and, going back in time, the Decade of Government Inflation, the Decade of Government Doing Its Own Thing, the Decade of Steady Government Growth, the Decade of Government Mass Murder, and the Decade of Government Prosperity Just Around the Corner.

Yet the horse-race side of elections can be irresistible and useful. It forces people to root for or against someone who seems to embody certain political values and priorities. It helps us think through what our own ideas mean in the concrete, and allows us to see professors, pastors, and pundits with their masks off.

Happily, a competitive presidential nomination process is already tearing the mask off key figures on the right. This is the first such opportunity in 43 years. Every previous Republican nomination was pretty much wrapped up in advance. Pat Buchanan put up a great challenge to George Bush in 1992, but everyone knew who would win that contest. There has long been a clear leader of the Republican pack: not only Bush, but Reagan, Ford, Nixon, Goldwater, and Eisenhower in his second term.

To find a contested nomination with real consequences for the power elite, we have to look to 1952, when conservatives and libertarians backed Robert Taft, and the establishment installed Eisenhower. The bitter experience of a stolen nomination formed a whole generation of activists, journalists, and scholars in distrust and hatred of the ruling class.

Yet such contests are essential for any ideological movement. This is not because, as the liberals say, diversity of opinion is a virtue in and of itself. Instead, it is because politics lends itself to ideological corruption, selling out and sucking up, and if there are no fights going on, that means everyone is pure (ha!), everyone has sold out, or dissent is being suppressed.

The state of conservatism has been placid from the founding of *National Review*, which stood athwart history and yelled, "Come on." The elites on the right have viewed their primary job as management of the Republican Party and its affiliated think tanks. At the

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grass roots, the job has been to obey the marching orders received from above, embodied in pre-chosen candidates.

Strict uniformity was the rule. There were a few things you were for and a few things you were against. In the early eighties, we were supposed to be against Tip O'Neil as a symbol of the big-spending Congress, and against people who blame America first. We were supposed to be for the balanced-budget amendment, funding for the Contras, funding for SDI, and talking about limited government.

The collapse of the Cold War smashed the banality of conservatism.

Dissenters were silenced as traitors. The result was a stultifying, sellouty movement that shunned thought and ideas, and pursued office and the exercise of power as ends in themselves.

The collapse of the Cold War smashed the banality of conservatism. First came the bitter split between the paleoconservatives and neoconservatives, which revealed for the first time that the happy anti-communist coalition was never anything more than a scam. The division, and the enemies made over it, continues to define the debate on the right today.

Next came the great paleo coalition, in which libertarians, under Murray N. Rothbard's leadership, engaged the cultural and real political landscape for the first time, and paleoconservatives, also under Rothbard's influence, tied their cultural and social views to an economic agenda that was pro-private property, anti-tax, and anti-central bank.

The libertarian and conservative paleos were united on isolationism, especially towards the Gulf War, while the neocons came out of the closet as the universalistic democratic imperialists they have always been.

In 1991, Buchanan saw that all this could shake grassroots activists out of their subservience. He seriously challenged Bush for the nomination, an impressive feat in a party that hadn't rethought its assumptions about the country or the world for more than four decades.

Everyone knew what the stakes were. Principled libertarians and paleoconservatives, even if they didn't agree with everything Buchanan stood for, were thrilled at the prospect of busting up the opinion cartel.

The neocons feared a resurgence of the Old Right they thought they had crushed when they took over conservative foundations, think tanks, and magazines. Buchanan threatened their dominance. That's why he was attacked as a racist, homophobe, anti-Semite, fascist, and all the rest of the leftist smears that come so naturally to hand for the "ex"-Trotskyites.

Were the neocons actually threatened? Yes, for they know better than anyone else how uncertain their control of the conservative mind is. The beliefs of the average conservative are a lot closer to *Triple R* than *Commentary*. That's why the neocons spend every waking moment trying to achieve a monopoly of opinion and to exclude alternative voices.

By understanding the importance neocons attach to opinion management, we gain insight into why they migrated to the right in the first place. They came over to complete the process begun by Buckley years earlier: to get closer to, then displace, and finally eliminate whatever remained of the anti-New Deal coalition.

This coalition consisted of opinions that once formed the core of right-wing opinion, but, by 1992, were no longer considered respectable within official conservatism: Southern agrarianism, private-property anarchism, anti-war isolationism, Rothbardian libertarianism, Randian rationalism, Catholic traditionalism, theocratic Calvinism, conspiracy-oriented populism, and the rest of the diverse but principled ideas that made for such a vibrant intellectual life. The neocons threw their weight and money on the side of the respectable opponents of these groups.

Meanwhile, the grassroots activists in the Republican Party, including those who identify with the anti-abortion politics of the Christian right, are becoming more and more paleo-oriented. Their instinctive hatred of the central state has begun to form itself into concrete demands for self government, and their natural lack of interest in Bosnian ethnic conflicts is developing into a principled and constitutional isolationism.

Besides these groups, a third major force in American political life has emerged: the paleo-populists, what Sam Francis calls the Middle American Radicals. As the least neocon of all, they seek to defend those who would exercise the right to associate (Waco), the right to disassociate (Ruby Ridge), and the right to bear arms (Brady Bill). While not connected politically to paleoism, they are its natural allies, and have zero loyalty to Washington, D.C.

The November 1994 elections represented the triumph of paleoism in all its forms, but for neoconism, it was a threat. Suddenly, a group of freshmen were stampeding Washington with no

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understanding of why Bill Kristol should be taken any more seriously than Great Aunt Florence.

After the election, the organized paleo movement tried to keep the freshmen from being corrupted by neocon-influenced Beltway think tanks, and to educate the freshmen about the true nature of the party elite: that it opposes revolution and devolution.

The neocons sought to direct the revolutionary fervor to their own ends. That meant manipulating the isolationist and reactionary sentiments of Republican voters into support for a person (Newt Gingrich) and a program (the Contract with America) that neocons controlled.

But the Contract was only a stopgap. It passed the House and was stalled in the Senate. For there to be grassroots pressure on the Senate, the Contract would have had to contain something that people really cared about. It turns out that most of the Contract is forgettable. Hardly anyone can name its provisions. There is only one plank that matters: a tax cut. But that has assumed an identity separate from the Contract itself.

Gingrich also helped revive the internal conflicts within the broadly conceived conservative movement. His techno-babbling utopianism alienated Evangelicals. His refusal to talk about markets and enterprise upset supply-siders. His hysteria on Bosnia and Iraq bothered isolationists. His devotion to Franklin D. Roosevelt, not to speak of his spearheading of Gatt and the Mexican bailout, took care of the rest. For Gingrich is no Reagan. He casts no spell over conservatives. More wrong steps, and his reputation will be gone for good.

In fact, the power of Gingrich's name to raise money is already declining. That is the telltale sign. If the title of conservative leader belongs to anyone, in these days of a diffuse and divided right, it is Buchanan. Meanwhile, what only the *Triple R* was saying last December—that the November Revolution had already been betrayed—is now a commonplace point.

The Republican Congressional leadership has only two strong bases of support left: the liberal media, which cooperates by accusing it of cutting off welfare, and the neocons, who say the revolution is the greatest thing since Irving Kristol read Leon Trotsky.

But the neocons have no concrete Congressional accomplishments to point to. The total budget is still going up, taxes are still high, affirmative action is still entrenched, and the American standard of living is still falling.

So, in a campaign led by the *Wall Street Journal*, articles appeared denouncing the "whiners" who point this out. Said *Journal* political reporter Gerald Seib: "Expect to hear much wailing and gnashing of teeth by Republican conservatives in the next few weeks. They will bemoan the failure to get all the pieces of the revolutionary agenda through Congress...to which the only logical response is: Relax, fellas."

Days later, the editorial page echoed the same theme. "A variant of the great political whine-in comes from conservative intellectuals and policy wonks, who complain that the Republican Congress isn't going far enough on key issues.... [But] there was never any prospect of sweeping out 60 years of bureaucratic liberalism in a single congressional session."

Rush Limbaugh, echoing his masters in typically dumbed-down fashioned, featured a quiz on his tv show: "How To Know If You're a Kook." If you think there's anything wrong with Newt Gingrich, if you think there is even a remote chance that the government bombed its own building in Oklahoma City, if you don't like the Trilateral Commission or the Council on Foreign Relations, if you think Perot's third party might be a good idea, you're a kook. Holding to just one of these or similar views brands you, to Limbaugh, as beyond the pale.

From Nafta and Gatt to Waco and the Mexican bailout, Limbaugh has been the es-tablishment's most reliable propagandist. Few, however, knew it. Now, thanks to the conservative wars, even his mask is slipping.

From Nafta and Gatt to Waco and the Mexican bailout, Limbaugh has been the establishment's most reliable propagandist.

Seib advanced a more sophisticated version of the respectable/kook dichotomy. There are those who think we should "strike while the iron is hot." That's a rendering we'll accept at the *Triple R*. Where Seib goes wrong is his description of the other school of thought, which he calls one-step-at-a-time, naming Bill Kristol as the chief proponent.

The implication is that the "hot-iron" school would not accept incremental changes for the better. It's true we want the New Deal tossed out tomorrow, but we'd be thrilled to see any progress toward less government—say a repeal of just this year's spending increases. Canceling Clinton's tax increases would be cause for a month-long cel-

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ebration, even if Bush's—which the Republicans have a moral obligation to repeal—weren't touched.

The trouble with the one-step-at-a-time school is not that it wants to go slow; it's that its steps are all in the wrong direction. Consider just one example: the welfare reform bill. It doesn't cut a dime, and its phony federalism is a cover for continued D.C. control, as well as pork for local Republican politicians, combined with an attempt to make it more difficult for principled governors of the future to opt out of welfare altogether.

Smearing the "hot-iron" school as opposing small steps toward less government reminds me of another canard against libertarian-minded conservatives: that we make "the perfect the enemy of the good," in Bill Rusher's Nafta-era phrase. But that would crazy as well as immoral. What we do is make the worst the enemy of the better. Thus we love lowering any tax by any amount, even if we think they should all be abolished.

What we don't love is a higher tax disguised as reform. Yet that is precisely the sort of scheme the Republican establishment has long asked us to accept.

As if we didn't have enough proof that Kristol is trouble for Republicans, his lavishly funded *Weekly Standard* outraged and disappointed its readership base with the very first issue. The magazine turns out to be poorly written, poorly edited, and poorly designed. Even with those deep flaws, the publication might have been able to accomplish its real mission, which is to unite the increasingly divided neocon forces for a national candidate and platform, and against all deviationists.

But doing so, at minimum, requires that the pretense of conservatism be kept up. On that front, the publication has failed. The *Standard*'s journalistic and conservative credentials were trumped in its first week by, of all things, the *New Republic*, which published Ruth Shalit's smashing piece on the chaos and anger that affirmative-action hiring has caused at the *Washington Post*.

The *Standard*'s journalistic and conservative credentials were trumped in its first week by, of all things, the *New Republic*.

But the *Standard*'s pro-establishment suckupism was the real shock. The clincher was an editorial by Bill Kristol plugging Colin Powell for president. It is a perfect example of how elections can reveal actual ideological principles. Instead of Kristol's slogans about how conservative he is, we now have only to pay attention to whom he is supporting for president.

"The mere example of an up-by-the-bootstraps black Republican war hero as president," Kristol writes, "could have a broadly conservative cultural effect."

Huh? The only cultural effect of a Powell presidency would be to prove that there are no limits to how far affirmative action can take you. But would a Powell presidency, as Kristol says, "be a useful way station on the road to a lasting conservative realignment?" That's code for getting more blacks in the party, and whatever you think of that goal, it has nothing to do with reducing the size of the government.

In any case, it was a bad time to become a Powell lover. Powell's autobiography appeared one week later, and in it he endorsed welfare, gun control, affirmative action, abortion, and big government in general.

What did the guardian of conservative opinion say about this? According to Kristol, "these are all respectable positions." Neocon Ralph Reed simpered that Power had praised the Christian Coalition and stood for "family values," and therefore was a respectable candidate.

Maybe in Bill's circles, but among the grassroots, this was shocking. Kristol made a further error by publicly expressing his disdain for conservatives in the editorial endorsing Powell. "Can a moderate win the nomination of a conservative" party? "Yes—especially if Powell throws a few bones to conservatives by saying the right things about personal responsibility, no new taxes, and limited government."

These are "bones" indeed, and not actual principled positions. But might not Kristol worry that his readers—as shown by protesting letters—are well to the right of him, and that he will lose credibility with them? He doesn't seem to be, for he is unashamedly pursuing his role as cheerleader for the sellouts. Consider this *Standard* editorial attacking whiners like us: "Congress is about to enact a budget plan that redirects 60-plus years of federal welfare policy, tearing it up root and branch, achieving fiscal balance by 2002 in the process. A history-making achievement, by ordinary standards."

Well, I suppose that's one way to describe a $50 billion *increase* in spending this year.

But the freshmen may not stand for it much longer. The most important vote of this entire Congress occurred when they sided with the Democrats to reject a military appropriations bill that increased the budget by $8 billion beyond the Pentagon's request, and loosened restrictions on abor-

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tions at military bases. The freshmen refused to vote for either, and the leadership flew into a panic.

That's only a slight indication of things to come. The Congress is no longer so divided in partisan terms as by interest-group affiliation. There are people in both parties who side with the elites and some who do not. The leadership of the two political parties, and thus their ideological controls and think-tank mouthpieces, no longer have the hold on America that they once did. That's a fact worthy of celebration.

Real conservatives and libertarians, Congressional freshmen, and the masses of American voters are crying out for an end to the corrupt system that is destroying our liberty and prosperity. They are seeing through the antics of the Washington elites, and they are coming to see that the Congressional elites and their ideological controls are essentially no different from those that preceded them. Despite setbacks and betrayals, the paleos are winning the conservative wars where it counts. ■

Impressions of the *Weekly Standard*

Paul Gottfried

After several months of advertising their product, the *Weekly Standard*'s editors have begun putting out issues. At last we can see the work of Fred Barnes, Bill Kristol, John Podhoretz, and the other nonphotogenic editors whose pictures have decorated the promo material. As everybody now knows, the blitz campaign behind the new publication has been spectacular. In addition to the millions put up by publisher Rupert Murdoch, the neocon hive has gone all out on behalf of its younger generation. After all, minicon editors are not like other human beings. And if neocon columnist Richard Grenier described *Weekly Standard* as the most brilliant conservative news publication, thereby slighting his employers at the Washington Times Corporation, even before the first issue came out, what are friends for but to reach for superlatives in characterizing a creation unknown even to themselves?

The neocon hive has gone all out on behalf of its younger generation.

One question that has occurred to me in waiting for the new publication is why has Murdoch pledged $3 million a year, plus advertising funds, to a project that is not likely to go anywhere. By now there are dozens of magazines featuring neocon party lines, and most of them produce stacks of remaindered copies. Though some of the well publicized ones, such as *American Spectator* and *Commentary*, have respectable sales, other neocon publications, such as the *National Interest* and *Journal of Democracy*, typically turn up in large numbers on bargain racks in local bookstores. The problem is that a fixed number of ideologues with a well-defined agenda cannot go on funding and writing for a steadily expanding body of publications. To engage in such an undertaking, the said ideologues must do one of two things, vary their views to give their writing broader appeal, and/or hire additional *talented* writers who can help them sustain greater publishing commitments.

The editors of *Weekly Standard* have done neither. The first two issues feature the usual crowd of neocon regulars and dependents and contain almost uniformly boring pieces. A review of *The End of Racism* in the second issue, by Glenn Loury, was unexpectedly and bracingly critical, but not typical of most of the contributions. The attack on Arafat in the same issue, by Daniel Pipes, for not showing equally effusive enthusiasm for the peace process in addressing different audiences, was sadly typical of neocon blockheadedness. Though Pipes does not demonstrate that Arafat does not accept the permanence of an Israeli state, he seems to think that he has proved that Arafat is treacherous... and, by implication, that the Israeli hardliners are right.

One essay in the first issue, by Marshall Wittmann, made me blush with embarrassment for a klotzy fellow-Jew. A Washington jobseeker who found employment with the Christian Coalition, Wittmann notes his family's embarrassment when he went to work for Bible-thumping goyim: "My relatives, good, open-minded liberals, thought I was *meshugah*. To them a 'Christian coalition' evoked pogroms and worse." Still, Wittmann defends his "job-choice" (which undoubtedly resulted from lack of choice) on the grounds that "as one committed to the security of Israel, I felt Pat Robertson was good for the Jews."

Though this confessional piece has other noteworthy passages, I shall leave it to neocon puffers to quote them in syndicated columns. Perhaps they can

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also muster enthusiasm in the first issue for the "Casual" section by John Podhoretz on his father's new hobby, and for the rambling essay by Charles Krauthammer, on the theology of Newt Gingrich. With a steady diet of such prose, the *Weekly Standard* will not be long for this world, even with Murdoch's deep pockets.

The one interesting aspect of the first two issues is the attempt by the minicons, and presumably by their parents, to find a suitable presidential candidate. This quest is not an idle one for neocons. As political parasites they live on government patronage and revel in being associated with those elected to high places. In a widely-quoted observation four years ago, Pat Buchanan compared neocons to fleas that were attaching themselves to the movement conservative dog.

In point of fact, neocon fleas do not have to attach themselves to conservative organisms in order to sustain themselves. They can also swing back and forth across the political spectrum without losing media credibility, providing they find candidates they can control and use. Thus three years ago an impressively large contingent of neocon publicists went over to then Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton; and as early as 1972 the neocons consciously divided their forces between McGovern and Nixon, to guarantee leverage in the next administration.

A similar hedging process among them has already begun, and this can be seen by sorting out remarks about the various presidential contenders in *Weekly Standard*. Clearly the publisher, Murdoch, who has published Gingrich's book, has his own presidential preference, and the first issue includes numerous observations about Gingrich. Krauthammer depicts the Speaker as a flak and in remarks that could have been written (more felicitously) by Rockwell or Raimondo, makes fun of Gingrich's New Age pomposities. Though Krauthammer seemed the least favorable of the commentators on Gingrich, no one among them had any real praise for him. David Frum comments morosely on the contrast between Gingrich's rhetoric and the "incomplete and disturbingly fragile achievements of the 104th Congress."

One might have mistaken Frum's observation for that of a paleoconservative were it not for the usual, obligatory insults about Buchanan and conservative nationalists, whom Frum contrasts to the real conservative, Ronald Reagan. Another essay, on Gingrich's operation as a congressional negotiator, by David McClintick, resembles some kind of stream-of-consciousness dialogue, before it becomes utterly incoherent. So much for Murdoch's friend in the hands of his minicon clients!

Allow me to express my own lack of surprise to find neocon princes behaving true to form.

More upbeat is the by-now publicized piece, by Bill Kristol, on Colin Powell. Kristol wants Powell to run for president and cites his popularity and respected status as a military leader. Though he never explicitly describes Powell as a man of the right, Kristol finesses this point by offering this opinion: a "huge victory by Powell running as a Republican would expand and solidify the emerging Republican majority. So, the ideological opacity of a Powell presidency notwithstanding, it could be a useful way station on the road to a lasting conservative realignment."

Unfortunately for this argument, Powell is not ideologically opaque but has taken explicitly liberal positions on social issues, including affirmative action. It would not be unfair to conclude that Bill Kristol and his parents and their friends have personal reasons for supporting Powell—and that the transparently defective argument that he makes for his candidacy is only a signal. It is intended to indicate positive vibes, and the availability of neocons to guide the anticipated Powell campaign.

Note that nowhere in his praise does Kristol call Powell a "conservative." He is merely describing, or pretending to, the effect of a Powell prospective candidacy. Moreover, on Sunday, September 17, after Powell had publicly announced his liberal social positions, Kristol appeared on David Brinkley's program, wearing his new hat as *Weekly Standard* editor, and repeated the treacle about Powell he had written several weeks earlier. His friend, neocon columnist Tony Snow expressed his own surprise the next day that Bill was backing a socially liberal presidential candidate. In the second issue of the *Weekly Standard*, there is also an excerpt from Powell's memoirs that is intended to make him look good—or his colleagues during the Gulf War less impressive.

Allow me to express my own lack of surprise to find neocon princes behaving true to form. They support liberals for office without losing their conservative accreditation; and the reason for both are obvious. Neocons are hungry for funds and influence, and the respectable conservative movement—i.e., the Washington-

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authorized version—is a hollow shell. It follows neocons no matter what, because both its funding and media relations depend on enjoying neocon favor.

In 1991 the neocons who supported Clinton did not suffer ostracism on the Republican right; nor were they driven off the editorial boards of putatively conservative magazines. They held on to their patronage and status as conservatives, while conservative magazines deplored the unappealing nature of the Republican Party, which had led some good conservatives to back Clinton. The analog to this conservative movement is the American Communist Party, which learned to reconcile reality with Stalinist whims. Today's professional conservatives have developed the same lackey relation to the Kristol-Podhoretz empire.

Certainly, liberal journalists and the liberal media would welcome both Powell's candidacy and Kristol's reaching out to the General. Powell as a president would be a useful front for the political class and for the kind of social engineers who have been active in the current administration. But he could also be packaged as an upwardly mobile black "conservative," without the personal flaws that have dogged Bill Clinton. Mark Shields on several news programs has given a preview of this packaging effort by the media. He has presented Powell as a "moderately conservative black," whom "no one but a racist" would refuse to support.

The respectable conservative movement—i.e., the Washington-authorized version—is a hollow shell. It follows neocons no matter what.

The presence of the Kristols and their vassals on the Powell staff would help reinforce this impression. But the neocons will not join Powell inexpensively. They will undoubtedly demand concessions, particularly those favorable to the Israeli hardliners, and may even keep the General waiting, while they look over other candidates one last time. But in the end the neocon power brokers and capifamiglia will go where they want. They lead, unlike the movement conservative equivalents of Earl Browder and Gus Hall who are there to take orders.

One more prediction may be in order. If the minicons currently associated with the *Weekly Standard* leave to join a presidential campaign or presidential administration, look for the publication to fold. There is not much holding it together, and the loss of a substantial part of its editorial board may lead Murdoch into giving it up entirely. I also suspect that Krauthammer and Barnes have joined the enterprise after some arm-twisting. There is nothing in the publication that would indicate that either is putting much into it. *Entrenous* I would prefer getting my wisdom teeth pulled to having to read the third issue. Perhaps that is the way some of the better established neocons feel about contributing to the *Weekly Standard.*

Professor Gottfried is author of the only true history of conservatism, The Conservative Movement, *available from the* Triple R *for $18 postpaid (800-325-7257).*

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Buchanan's Bad Idea

L.H.R., Jr.

Pat Buchanan is forcing all the Republican contenders to the right on a host of issues. Thanks to his outspoken opinions on Nafta and Gatt, Dole and Gramm haven't mentioned a word about them. When Buchanan came out for lowering the inheritance tax, Lugar followed suit. On immigration, foreign aid, and government intervention in education, every candidate is paying lip service to Buchanan's issues.

Because of his influence, we need to worry when Buchanan is wrong on an issue, especially if his error could make our long-run victory more difficult. The issue is campaign finance reform, a long-time project of good-government liberals and now some Perot voters. Not all the ideas of reform groups like Common Cause are bad, but they miss the point. Our trouble is not corrupt campaigns, but the entire structure of government.

As radicals standing outside the system, we have an interest in

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keeping the electoral system as open as possible. We must be careful that we do not inadvertently aid the elites.

One of Buchanan's ideas would lead to a more closed system. He would limit campaign contributions to the district or state of the person running. That means that Jesse Helms could no longer raise money outside his state, and neither, for that matter, could Ron Paul or Helen Chenoweth. All candidates would have to rely on donors who are actually capable of voting for them.

This system would be just if elected official governed only people in their districts. But that's far from the case. It matters to everyone's future whether Idaho's delegation is pro or anti-gun, or Texas's favors or opposes the UN. It's not only numerical majorities that count, but who is in a leadership position and who is not.

For example, it was in our interest to see Tom Foley defeated in the last election. Similarly, it's our interest to see Newt Gingrich defeated in the next election by someone to his right. I'm sure the readers of the *Triple R* would dig deep to finance such a campaign, which would send the proper message far and wide.

It's disgusting that Newt is running the Congress, even though nobody outside his district had a chance to vote against him. So long as he rules us, we should be free to finance his defeat. Meanwhile, the freshmen who truly represent the will of the masses of people, are hardly given a hearing. So long as this is the case, everyone ought to be free to push more freshmen in office from other districts.

We all know that right-wing donors—people who understand how crucial ideas are and are also willing to back them financially—are few and far between. By contrast, liberal donors and PACs infest every state and district. Under Buchanan's rule, liberal moneybags will always have candidates to back, and, as the real insiders in the election game, they will also be able to figure out ways around the law.

If Buchanan's regulation goes into effect, we will all be restricted in our ability to influence the out come of elections and therefore the manner in which we are governed. There will be fewer independent candidates in the Senate and the House, and we can forget ever getting a true paleo in Congressional leadership.

This commentary wouldn't be necessary if Pat Buchanan weren't, in many ways, acting as the conscience of the candidates. So when he's wrong, as he is this time, it must be taken seriously. If he dropped the idea now, the media would forget about it in a week, and so would the other candidates, and we would retain our right to influence the direction of our political future.

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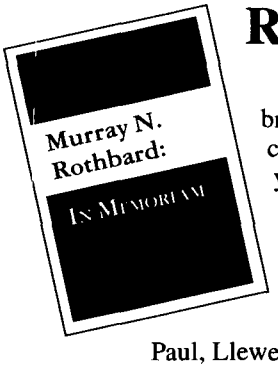

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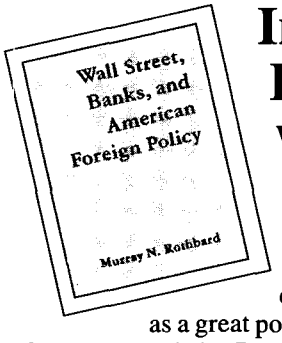

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